

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year ended 31st December, 1952.

To the Chairman and Members of the Stevenage Urban District Council.

I beg to present the above report prepared in accordance with the directions of Ministry of Health Circular 2/1953.

SECTION A.

LOCAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	5,895 (change of boundary at 1.4.53).
Home Population - Mid 1952 (Registrar General's Estimate)	7,886
Number of inhabited houses at 31.3.53.	2,874.
Rateable Value (1st April, 1953)	£60,454
Sum represented by a penny rate 1953-54	£281

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1952.

LIVE BIRTHS.

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Stevenage Urban District</u>	<u>Comparable rate for England and Wales</u>
Legitimate	156	92	64		
Illegitimate	8	6	2		
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All	164	98	66		
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Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population				.20.8..	.15.3..

DEATHS:

	<u>61</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>30</u>		
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Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population				.7.7..	.11.3..

STILLBIRTHS:

Legitimate	3	-	3		
Illegitimate	-	-	-		
	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>		
All	3	-	3		
	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>		
Rate per 1,000 total (live & still) births				.18.0..	.22.6..

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR:

Rate for All infants per 1,000 live births	.6.1..	.27.6..
Rate for Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births	.6.4..	
Rate for Illegitimate " " " illegitimate births	.0.0..	

Actual number of such deaths (a) <u>under 4 weeks</u> and (b) <u>total under 1 year</u>		
Legitimate	-	1
Illegitimate	-	-
All	-	1

Deaths from Puerperal causes	-
Deaths from Cancer (all sites)	15
Deaths from Measles	-
Deaths from Whooping Cough	-
Deaths from other infective and parasitic diseases	-

Comment on Vital Statistics.

The estimated local population for mid 1952 shows an increase of 1227 but the exceptional birthrate of 20.8 indicates the steep rise of inward migration to the New Town in the second half of the year. Similarly the record low annual deathrate (7.7) for the year reflects the recent entry of younger age groups to the district. Actually the County Planning Authority gives an estimated increase of population over the 1951 census figure of 3,572 at 31st March 1953.

The local infant mortality rate for the year was exceptionally favourable and the stillbirth rate was below the national figure for England and Wales, indications of a continued favourable environment for young children and efficient welfare services.

The following table shows the main local vital statistics over the ten years 1943-52:-

	<u>Birth Rate</u>	<u>Death Rate</u>	<u>Inf. Mort. Rate</u>
1952	20.8	7.7	6
1951	18.4	10.4	16
1950	14.0	10.5	-
1949	16.9	13.1	18
1948	16.2	10.4	29
1947	18.5	12.1	26
1946	16.9	12.7	9
1945	14.5	10.9	22
1944	16.8	12.1	54
1943	15.9	12.6	39

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

No important change occurred during the year.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

Up to the 26th June, 1952, the Town was supplied with water from Broomen Green Station Stevenage and on this date the Station was closed down.

From the 27th June, 1952, the Town has been supplied with water from a temporary station operated at Whitchall which consists of a 36" diameter borehole 340 feet deep in the chalk, with a 120 h.p. submersible pump, 90 feet below the surface.

The water is conveyed through a 24" diameter rising main, some 4 miles in length from Whitchall to Stevenage Pinn Green Reservoir which has a capacity of 2 million gallons.

From this reservoir a constant and normal supply of water is distributed by main to 2,842 houses (approximate population 7,796) and by standpipes to 4 houses (approximate population 10) while 28 houses (approximate population 80) are supplied by private wells.

Private Wells.

Two samples of water were taken for bacteriological examination and found satisfactory.

64 samples of water taken by your Sanitary Inspector were submitted to the Luton Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination, and 87 samples by Messrs. Rideal, Rideal & Sciver, London, for bacteriological examination,

Summary of samples submitted for bacteriological examination to the Luton Public Health Laboratory.

	<u>No. of samples.</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Broomen Green: Raw water	18	15	3
" " : Chlorinated water	21	21	-
Whitchall: Chlorinated water	25	23	2 +

+ Tap contamination

Summary of samples taken for bacteriological examination by Messrs. Rideal,
Rideal & Seiver, London, on behalf of the Stevenage Development
Corporation.

<u>Description.</u>	<u>No. of samples</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Broomen Green: Raw water	17	17	-
" " : Chlorinated "	34	34	-
Whitchall: Raw water	9	9	-
" : Chlorinated water	27	27	-

Chemical Analyses

6 samples were taken and found correct.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Total number of inspections for all purposes 1140, divided as follows:-

Defects under the Housing Acts	397
Defects under the Factories Act	35
Prevention of Infectious Diseases including disinfection & disinfection	27
Sanitary conditions of schools, public halls, cinemas & public houses	30
Inspections under the Milk & Dairies Order (including farms)	41
Inspection of slaughterhouses, butchers' shops, vans and food stores	107
Meat and Food Inspections	6
Miscellaneous Food Inspections	21
Prevention of nuisances	61
Inspection of drainage etc.	17
Inspection of the Town's Water Supply & Water Samples	64
Inspection of Private Wells & Water Samples	2
Inspection re Insect Infestation	3
Inspection under the Food & Drugs Act -	
(i) Ice-cream	75
(ii) Ice-lollies	9
(iii) Dried Egg	16
(iv) Restaurant kitchens	64
(v) Preparation rooms	12
Inspections re smoke observations	4
Inspections re Shops Act	14
Inspections re Moveable Dwellings	77
Inspections re Rag Flock & Other Filling Materials Act	6
Inspections re Pet Animals Act	2

Miscellaneous

Inspections re storage of petroleum	24
Inspections re living & social conditions of applicants for Council Houses	2
Inspections re Employment Agencies	4
Inspections re Civil Defence	20

Sewage & Sewage Disposal.

The Town is provided with a foul sewer 24" diameter leading to bacterial treatment at the Stevenage Disposal Works and a 36" surface water sewer discharging into a water-course, both of which are satisfactory.

Refuse Collection and Disposal of Salvage.

House refuse collection, the disposal of same and the cleansing of the Town is supervised and carried out by the Surveyor. The refuse is disposed of by semi-controlled tipping.

During the year 15 tons of materials were salvaged which realised £166.0.0.

Smoke Observations.

4 smoke observations were taken and during each period no nuisances occurred.

Petroleum (Consolidation) Act, 1928.

18 premises are licensed for petroleum, carbide of calcium etc. and the regulations are satisfactorily complied with.

SECTION D.Housing.

Routine house-to-house inspections were carried out at 264 houses, viz. 119 private and 145 Council Houses.

During the year 825 houses were erected, viz. 37 by the Stevenage Urban District Council and 786 by the Stevenage Development Corporation and 2 by private enterprise.

Housing Act. - Prevention and Abatement of Overcrowding.

During the year no houses were found overcrowded.

Sanitary improvements were undertaken in existing dwelling houses, viz:-

Premises re-drained	2
Sanitary improvements including drainage	81
Other work for the abatement of nuisances	44

2 formal and 80 informal notices were served upon owners of property.

Demolition.

2 houses were demolished.

Vermineous Premises.

6 houses were treated for vermin which were eradicated by spraying with a liquid vermin mixture named Zaldecide while inspection of furniture, bedding, etc. was carried out by the Local Council.

SECTION E.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH IN RESPECT
OF THE YEAR, 1952, FOR THE URBAN DISTRICT OF STEVENAGE IN THE COUNTY OF HERTFORD.
PART I OF THE ACT.

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	21	10	-	-
(2) Factories not included in (1) above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	50	25	4	-
(3) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers Premises)	10	5	2	-
TOTAL	81	40	6	-

2. CASES in which DEFECTS were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	1	1	-	1	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)					
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)					
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)					
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	-	1	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	2	2	-	2	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT - OUTWORK.

Number of Outworkers 1, i.e. Wearing Apparel. (Sections 110 & 111).

Inspection and Supervision of Food etc.

MILK.

There are only 7 registered producers of milk in the district from which the milk is collected and pasteurised before distribution.

In addition there are 4 registered retailers from whom milk is produced outside the Stevenage district, 2 being licensed for the sale of Tuberculin Tested and Pasteurised Milk and 2 for Tuberculin Tested, Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised) and Pasteurised Milk.

34 samples of milk were taken for bacteriological examination which gave the following results:-

<u>Description.</u>	<u>No. of samples.</u>	<u>Passed</u>	<u>Failed</u>
Tuberculin Tested	6	6	-
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised)	9	9	-
Pasteurised	19	18	1

ICE-CREAM.

At present there are no manufacturers of ice-cream in Stevenage.

62 samples of ice-cream were taken for bacteriological examination from retailers, restaurants, etc., and the following summary shows the provisional grading:-

	<u>No. of samples</u>	<u>Grade 1.</u>	<u>Grade 2.</u>	<u>Grade 3.</u>	<u>Grade 4.</u>
1952	62	28 (45.16%)	27 (43.54%)	7 (11.29%)	-
1951	60	26 (43.33%)	21 (35%)	8 (13.33%)	5 (8.33%)
1950	69	42 (60.87%)	17 (24.63%)	6 (8.69%)	4 (5.79%)
1949	43	13 (30.23%)	12 (27.90%)	8 (18.60%)	10 (23.25%)
1948	25	3 (12%)	12 (48%)	2 (8%)	8 (32%)

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

There are 4 licensed private slaughterhouses (including one knackers' slaughterhouse) in the District which are kept up to a fair standard. Only occasional slaughterings licensed by the Local Food Officer are carried out, amounting in all to 6 pigs of which the carcasses were inspected.

Food surrendered as unfit for human consumption in shops, stores, etc. have to be certified before replacements can be made. During the year the following amount of food was condemned as unsound and unfit.

Meat (English)	186	lbs
Meat (Imported)	12	"
Fish	70	"
Tinned Ham	120	"
Tinned Meat	29	"
Other tinned food	78	"
Total	495	"

Bakehouses, restaurant kitchens, preparation rooms, manufacturers of preserved food and tradesmens vans etc., are inspected with a view to keeping up a good standard of cleanliness.

FOOD POISONING.

There was no record, either formal or informal, of any such occurrence in your district during the year.

SECTION F.PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Total notifications of infectious diseases for the year amounted to Measles - 291, Scarlet Fever - 16, Whooping Cough - 5, Acute pneumonia - 4, and Poliomyelitis - 2.

The high incidence of measles during the fourth quarter of the year was most marked. Scarlet Fever was sporadic throughout the year, almost confined to infant school age and of mild case severity.

Acute poliomyelitis locally amounted to two cases in the Autumn quarter, one school child (non-paralytic) and one adult (with mild paralysis).

Diphtheria was again absent from the area for yet another year. Despite its long continued absence from the district the offer of infant protection by immunisation continues to be accepted by a large majority of parents.

TUBERCULOSIS.New Cases & deaths during the year, 1952.

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory M	F	Non-Respiratory M	F	Respiratory M	F	Non-Respiratory M	F
0 - 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 45	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
55 - 65	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
and over	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Totals	9	12	2	1	1	1	-	-
Deaths allocated by the Registrar-General after final transfers					1	1	-	-

At first sight there would, for a small town, appear an alarming increase of new notifications, particularly in the female 15 - 35 age group. However, scrutiny shows that 17 out of the 21 respiratory and 1 of the 3 non-respiratory total are inward transfers to the town from other areas, particularly Greater London. It can reasonably be concluded that in selection of New Town residence (with favourable housing) the presence of a diagnosed case of tuberculosis, either in the wage earner or more frequently in the wife or other dependent, has been an influencing factor. Such cases must more often be of a controlled or quiescent type.

Deaths for the year were two, the same fairly low figure as for the previous year, 1951.

In conclusion, I would acknowledge having received every help from your chief officers and particularly would I acknowledge the most valuable help received from your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. H. Foden, who has been responsible for compiling the Sanitary sections of this Report.

Your obedient Servant,

Victor R. Walker,

June, 1953.

District Medical Officer of Health.